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## **Minutes of the October 28, 2019 meeting**

Attendees included Ian Rothman, John Bogasky, Arquilla Ridgell, Martin Gelman, Ben Joyner, Craig Wilson, Darcy Buckley and Dorinda Danneman.

Darcy Buckey, BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) Planner, MCDOT spoke about the Flash Bus Rapid Transit project. In 2013 the Transit Corridor Functional Master Plan was approved, complimentary to the Corridor Cities Transitway. The project was state-led, spending \$100M for design, but the state stopped work in 2017 and tried to transfer the project to Montgomery County. The county has not accepted the transfer, and the state has removed it from the Draft State Transportation Priorities Plan.

There are currently 3 active BRT projects. They were originally state projects but the county has taken them over.

US 29 Flash – Burtonsville to Silver Spring, peak hours service (15 minute intervals), no dedicated lanes  
Briggs Chaney Road to Silver Spring, all day service (15 minute intervals)

355 BRT – Study completed, now in preliminary design

There is an open request for information from the public sector

Exploring funding options

Veirs Mill Road BRT – Rockville to Wheaton

Study completed 2017

Has funding for design stage

The CIP (Capital Improvements Program) includes funding for planning for New Hampshire Avenue Transitway (FY22) and North Bethesda (FY24) Transitway (Montgomery Mall to Grosvenor Metro).

The Georgia Avenue BRT was a state project and received a lot of community opposition.

355 Flash would extend 22 miles from Bethesda to Clarksburg. It would have seven sections, and several alternatives are being considered. Alt. A - \$184M, Mixed traffic with BRT Features. Alt. B - \$686M to \$820M, Mostly median-running. Alt. C - \$534M, Mostly curb-running. They will have a better sense of the timing of this project next year, it will be at least 5 years. The benefit of BRT in Rockville is having bus stations between Metro stations, increasing local access.

US 29 Flash will have level boarding at stations, buses will have 3 doors. Stations will be easy to find and use, be accessible and maintainable. Plans are to open late spring or early summer of 2020. Off-board fare payment. Flash buses will accept SmarTrip cards. Fare is expected to be \$2.00.

Connections to the Purple Line and Metro will be at the Silver Spring Transit Center. The bus from Burtonsville will stop at Tech Road, 4 Corners, Fenton Street and the Transit Center. Service will be every 15 minutes during peak hours. The bus from Briggs Chaney/Castle Rock will stop at Tech Road, April Lane, White Oak transit center, Oak Leaf, Burnt Mills, 4 Corners, Fenton Street and the Transit Center. Service will be every 15 minutes, all day.

For the section between 4 Corners and Silver Spring, they are looking for possible improvements, both physical and operational (managed lanes, HOV3/bus lane), funded by a federal grant. They have modeled a 30% time savings.

The US29 Flash will have 16 buses, 14 will run during peak times. Buses are colorful and articulated (accordion). <https://www.ridetheflash.com/us29/>

Bus service on the US 29 corridor is being analyzed for the best ways to connect the different services. Some changes may be made to reduce duplication, but they want the Flash Bus to be an addition to service. Historically this has been a WMATA corridor, with Ride-On buses connecting to MetroBus. WMATA may reduce some of their bus trips. The county would want them to take those buses and use them elsewhere in Montgomery County.

The Master Plan vision is to have new lanes added to road for Flash buses when properties are redeveloped. Purchasing properties would have huge impacts and large costs, so in the interim, taking a travel lane for the buses is still being considered.

A suggestion from the audience – Connect the US 29 Flash Bus and the 355 BRT with another BRT line.

A DOT Pilot Program, Ride-On Flex, is operating in Wheaton/Glenmont. Ride-On Flex is a last-mile service to get a ride. Rides are \$2.00, by reservation. They have 11 handicap-accessible buses. They are doing a lot of outreach to the community to provide information about this new service. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-transit/flex/>

The Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan update, which was put on hold several years ago, is back on. We will try to get a speaker about this.

Glenallan Elementary School – there is a petition to have a traffic signal installed at Randolph Road and Heurich Road. Crossing at that location without a signal is hazardous.

The Planning Department is working on the Thrive 2050 Super Master Plan. They are looking for groups to reach out to. <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/master-plan-list/general-plans/thrive-montgomery-2050/>

According to Nancy Navarro's office, they got the Glenmont Shopping Center owners talking with the State Highway Administration about better access into the Center from Layhill Road. SHA is to look at better access from Metro. The SHA study results should be available shortly (90 days from the study start time of July/August). SHA will present their findings to the owners. Craig will follow up with SHA this week. Navarro's office is talking about upgrades at the shopping center – they want all owners to spruce up at the same time, not piecemeal. They would like to fix up the parking lot with planters to guide traffic, and make it safer for pedestrians. Pedestrian safety data does not capture private parking lots. Public pressure on the owners may get results.

Winexburg Manor was sold this summer to AION Development LLC for \$121.5M. The new name is Landmark Glenmont Station.

**The next Glenmont Exchange Meeting will be Monday, November 25, 2019 at 7:30 pm in the Poplar Run Clubhouse, 13500 Stargazer Place, Silver Spring, MD 20906**

Minutes submitted by Dorinda Danneman, Secretary.